UNITED
NATIONS

TD

United Nations
Conference
on Trade and
Development

Distr.
GENERAL

TD/B/COM.1/EM.12/1
4 September 2000

Original: ENGLISH

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities
Expert Meeting on National Experiences with Regulation and Liberalization: Examples in the Construction Services Sector and its Contribution to the Development of Developing Countries
Geneva, 23 – 25 October 2000
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

I. Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

3. National experiences with regulation and liberalization: examples in the construction services sector and its contribution to the development of developing countries

4. Adoption of the outcome of the Meeting

GE. *0000051987* LS
ENG

I. Annotations to the provisional agenda

Item 1: Election of officers

1. It is recommended that the Expert Meeting elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson-cum-Rapporteur.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

2. The provisional agenda for the Expert Meeting is reproduced in section I above. The provisional schedule of meetings for the three days is attached to this document.

3. At the consultations of the President of the Trade and Development Board with the Bureau, coordinators and interested delegations on 31 March 2000, member States decided to convene an Expert Meeting on National Experiences with Regulation and Liberalization: Examples in the Construction Services Sector and its Contribution to the Development of Developing Countries. The decision was made in accordance with the UNCTAD X Plan of Action (TD/386), paragraph 134, which states: "UNCTAD should help developing countries in identifying: the priority sectors where early trade liberalization should take place; the main trade barriers that developing countries face in those service sectors, especially those which limit developing country ability to export their services; the preconditions, at the domestic level, which are necessary for developing countries to benefit from trade liberalization in the service sector in general. Attention should be paid to the opportunities offered to developing countries by opening the economic environment. This analysis should be supported, where necessary, by technical assistance to strengthen their domestic services capacity, and in particular through support in the area of policy and legislative adjustments."

Item 3: National experiences with regulation and liberalization: examples in the construction services sector and its contribution to the development of developing countries

4. The discussion under the substantive item will focus on exchange of national experience in regulation and liberalization in construction services, while emphasizing successful country-specific experiences, the varied approaches that countries embraced, and what difficulties they have encountered in building own capacities. Presentations by national experts are expected to provide insight into experience in exporting and importing construction services. Experts will focus on factors that would maximize the development impact for the developing countries in the context of the continuing regulatory reform and the process of liberalization at national, regional and multilateral levels. It is also hoped that the deliberations under this item would lead to an identification of the options available for national policy-makers, issues to be dealt with through regional integration, and actions to be taken at the multilateral levels with the aim of promoting development of the developing countries. A proposed guideline to inputs by experts is attached to this document.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/EM.12/2 — Regulation and liberalization: examples in the construction services sector and its contribution to the development of developing countries

Item 4: Adoption of the outcome of the Meeting

5. The Expert Meeting will adopt its recommendations, which will be assessed by participating member States before being submitted to the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities in February 2001. The final report will be compiled under the authority of the Chairperson after the conclusion of the Meeting.

PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE OF THE MEETING

Day 1 (23 October 2000)	Day 2 (24 October 2000)	Day 3 (25 October 2000)
(10 a.m.- 1 p.m.) **Plenary** Opening statement Item 1: Election of officers Item 2: Adoption of the agenda **Informals** Item 3: National experiences with regulation and liberalization: examples in the construction services sector and its contribution to the development of developing countries	*(10 a.m.- 1 p.m.)* **Informals (continued)** Item 3: (continued)	*(10 a.m.- 1 p.m.)* **Informals (continued)** Item 3: (continued)
(3 p.m.- 6 p.m.) **Informals (continued)** Item 3: (continued)	*(3 p.m.- 6 p.m.)* **Informals (continued)** Item 3: (continued)	*(3 p.m.- 6 p.m.)* **Plenary (closing)** Item 4: Adoption of the outcome

Inputs from experts

Experts nominated by Member states are requested to submit brief papers in advance of the Meeting to the UNCTAD secretariat. Papers will be made available to other participants at the Meeting in the form and language in which they are received. An expert paper should refer to architectural and engineering design services and to physical construction services. Inputs from experts from all UNCTAD member States (developing countries, LDCs, countries in transition, and developed countries) would be pertinent to the deliberations at the Meeting.

Experts may wish to formulate their inputs according to the questionnaire attached below, although it is not compulsory to follow it. Experts are encouraged to provide concrete example of country experiences as specifically as possible.

Domestic market for construction services

- **Import and export activities: are foreign companies operating in the country or are domestic companies working on projects abroad?**
- **Company and profiles: who are the main players supplying services and what types of services?**
- **Domestic demand: what types of projects are implemented in the domestic market?**
- **Business environment: what recent changes and forms of cooperation - strategic alliances, joint ventures; mergers, full foreign ownership – have been seen in your market?**
- **E-commerce: what is the impact of information technologies in general, have companies in your country benefited from Internet-based business-to-business transactions, and if not why not?**
- **Transfer of technology: how are new technological processes affecting the competitiveness of your companies and what are the available options?**
- **Labour market characteristics: what are the competitive advantages and disadvantages?**
- **Government procurement: how would opening up of government procurement to international open tendering affect the domestic market?**
- **Recognition of professional qualifications: what is the role of professional associations in promoting recognition of qualifications abroad? Is the country party to a mutual recognition agreement and has this contributed to facilitation of the cross-border supply of the professional services?**
- **Multilateral and bilateral aid: what is the impact of development funding in construction, if any?**
- **Finance: what are the options available to companies in developing countries in obtaining necessary finance for export activities?**

Domestic policy instruments

- **Capital and exchange controls: how can their negative impact on trade be minimized?**
- **Registration, license and pre-qualification standards: what regulations on the use of land, building regulations and technical requirements, building permits and inspection, registration of proprietors, contractors and professionals, regulations of fees and remunerations, environmental regulations, fiscal policy measures, etc. may preclude foreign participation in the market or prevent supply of services abroad?**
- **Competition policy: what are the issues for companies of developing countries competing abroad? How important is enforcement of competition domestically? Is there a need for greater transparency and special disciplines?**
- **Use of subsidies and tax incentives: what forms of support are received from the Government and how important are they?**
- **Preferential treatment in bidding accorded to selected countries: is provision for such treatment provided to other countries through regional or bilateral agreements?**
- **How is the Government facilitating the transfer of technology to developing countries?**

(Continued on the next page)

Liberalization of market access through multilateral trade in services negotiations

- What services are covered under the construction services sector? What other services sectors are linked to provision of construction services?
- What barriers are the most prevalent for the temporary movement of project staff across borders? Which occupations should benefit from liberalization as being more important to the profession?
- Are disciplines necessary to ensure competitive supply of construction services worldwide?
- Would transparency in government procurement improve penetration of developing countries into developed country markets and what conditions should be met for this to happen?
- What agreements on rules and limitations concerning the use of subsidies strengthen the competitive position of companies from developing countries?

Experts are requested to submit papers by 9 October 2000 to:

Ms. Jolita Butkeviciene
Division on International Trade in Goods and Services, and Commodities
UNCTAD
Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
tel: +41 22 907 49 77
fax: +41 22 907 00 44
E-mail: jolita@unctad.org